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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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OFFICE INTERNATIONAL DES EPIZOOTIES

**DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE OIE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE AT THE 63rd
GENERAL SESSION RELATED TO THE SPS AGREEMENT**

The Secretariat received the attached note prepared by the OIE Secretariat regarding the decisions taken by the OIE International Committee at its 63rd General Session held from 15 to 19 May 1995, related to the SPS Agreement.

Adoption of new measures in the *International Animal Health Code*

Additions and modifications on the following topics were made to the *International Animal Health Code*:

1. Electronic certification
2. Foot and mouth disease (FMD)
3. Vesicular stomatitis
4. Infectious bovine rhinotracheitis/infectious pustular vulvovaginitis
5. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy
6. Equine piroplasmiasis
7. Equine viral arteritis
8. Small ruminant semen
9. Destruction of FMD virus in meat, animal products for industrial use, and milk and cream
10. Protection of animals during international transport.

The definition of *FMD free zone practising vaccination* and the strengthening of conditions governing trade in live animals and meat and bone meal from countries where bovine spongiform encephalopathy has been reported are among the most important of these new measures.

Adoption of an *International Aquatic Animal Health Code* and a *Diagnostic Manual for Aquatic Animal Diseases*

An international Health Code covering international trade in fish, molluscs and crustaceans has been drawn up by the OIE Fish Diseases Commission. Though based on the *International Animal Health Code*, it differs from it in various respects to take into account the specific nature of the aquatic environment.

It is accompanied by a *Diagnostic Manual for Aquatic Diseases*, which is the counterpart of the OIE *Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines* linked to the *International Animal Health Code*.

The aforementioned Commission has invited the Member States of the European Union to submit detailed comments. These will be examined at the next meeting of the Commission, which will submit any proposals for amendments to the International Committee at the 1996 General Session.

Adoption of new diagnostic tests for international trade

Following a proposal by the OIE Standards Commission, the OIE International Committee adopted new "prescribed tests" and "alternative tests", which should be used in international trade in animals and animal products whenever the *International Animal Health Code* recommends the use of laboratory techniques.

In all, the selected diagnostic tests relate to two OIE List A diseases and nine List B diseases.

Resolutions relating to the establishment of a list of countries and zones which are free from specific diseases

The OIE International Committee adopted three Resolutions relating to the procedure for recognising Member Countries as being entirely or partially free from FMD or rinderpest (see Resolutions Nos XI, XII and XIV, appended).

The OIE Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission has thus been given the responsibility initially for drawing up a list of countries free from FMD without vaccination (comprising countries which are already widely accepted as so for the purposes of international trade). This "baseline list" will be completed, following the procedure laid down in the document appended to Resolution No. XII, to include countries newly acquiring the aforementioned health status or any other "free" status defined in Article 2.1.1.2 of the *International Animal Health Code*.

A similar procedure will be followed with a view to recognising that previously infected countries have succeeded in eradicating rinderpest from their territory.

During the discussion on this subject at the General Session, the OIE Commission for Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics undertook to ensure total transparency of its work at each stage of the procedure. This means that, at any moment, the Delegate of a Member Country will, upon request, be able to access the relevant information which led the Commission to consider that a country or part of the territory of a country was free from a disease, and, where appropriate, to make known any comments or objections.

Epidemiological surveillance systems for contagious bovine pleuropneumonia

Through Resolution No. XIII, the OIE International Committee adopted *Standards for Epidemiological Surveillance Systems for Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia*, prepared by the OIE Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission along the lines of standards relating to rinderpest, which were themselves endorsed in 1991.

Article 2 of the Resolution emphasises that although these are standards they should be interpreted with a degree of flexibility, given that the more intensive the surveillance system the shorter the timeframe required before declaring provisional freedom from a disease.

Technical item for the 64th General Session (May 1996)

The International Committee selected the following technical item for the following General Session:

The use of OIE recommendations and procedures by Member Countries for international trade in relation to the World Trade Organization.

A rapporteur for this technical item will shortly be designated; his task will be to draw up a working document based on contributions received from the Delegates of Member Countries.

RESOLUTION No. XI

Establishment of a list of foot and mouth disease free countries where vaccination is not practised

CONSIDERING THAT

1. The International Committee has designated the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Other Epizootics Commission responsibility for advising it, as and where necessary, on the nature and course, especially in terms of space and time, of the major transmissible animal diseases, and on methods for epidemiological surveillance of these diseases
2. The Organic Statutes of the OIE [Article 4 (2)] state that one of the objectives of the organisation is to collect and bring to the attention of Member Countries all facts and documents of general interest concerning the spread of epizootic diseases and the means used to control them
3. Article 2.1.1.2. of the *International Animal Health Code* defines requirements for an FMD free country where vaccination is not practised
4. The Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission defined the criteria by which they would propose that countries widely accepted as FMD free without vaccination according to the requirements of Article 2.1.1.2. of the *Code* be considered so. Several countries could meet these criteria, and could be listed in a publication by the OIE for use as a baseline upon which Member Countries if they wish to do so could request a change in their listed status
5. During the 62nd General Session, the Committee adopted Resolution No. IX, 'Countries and zones that may be considered as free from foot and mouth disease'
6. Information published by the OIE is derived from declarations made by the official Veterinary Services of Member Countries. The OIE is not responsible for inaccurate publication of country disease status based on inaccurate or incomplete information or changes in epidemiological status or other significant events which were not promptly reported to the Central Bureau subsequent to the time of declaration of freedom

THE COMMITTEE

RESOLVES

That the Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission should prepare a list of Member Countries which are FMD free where vaccination is not practised, according to the provisions of Article 2.1.1.2. of the *International Animal Health Code*, for its acceptance by the International Committee for publication by the Director General.

(Adopted by the International Committee of the OIE on 19 May 1995)

RESOLUTION No. XII

Procedure for the recognition of the foot and mouth disease status of Member Countries

CONSIDERING THAT

1. During the 62nd General Session, the International Committee adopted Resolution IX, 'Countries and zones that may be considered as free from foot and mouth disease (FMD)'
2. During the 63rd General Session, the International Committee resolved that the Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission should prepare a list of Member Countries which are FMD free where vaccination is not practised, according to the provisions of Article 2.1.1.2. of the *International Animal Health Code*, for its acceptance by the International Committee for publication by the Director General. The list will serve as a baseline for a procedure for recognising the FMD status of Member Countries
3. The Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission, in their meeting of 16-20 January 1995, also proposed to the International Committee a procedure for acceptance of evidence that countries not so listed or zones within their territories can be considered free of FMD if the country requests that this be done
4. Information published by the OIE is derived from declarations made by the official Veterinary Services of Member Countries. The OIE is not responsible for inaccurate publication of country disease status based on inaccurate or incomplete information or changes in epidemiological status or other significant events which were not promptly reported to the Central Bureau subsequent to the time of declaration of freedom

THE COMMITTEE

RESOLVES

That the Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission should follow the principles of the procedure described in the report of their 16-20 January 1995 meeting, to update the list of FMD free countries where vaccination is not practised and so that it also includes other categories of Member Country FMD free status described in Article 2.1.1.2. of the *International Animal Health Code*.

(Adopted by the International Committee of the OIE on 19 May 1995)

**EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE OIE
FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE AND OTHER EPIZOOTICS COMMISSION**

Paris, 16 - 20 January 1995

The proposed procedure

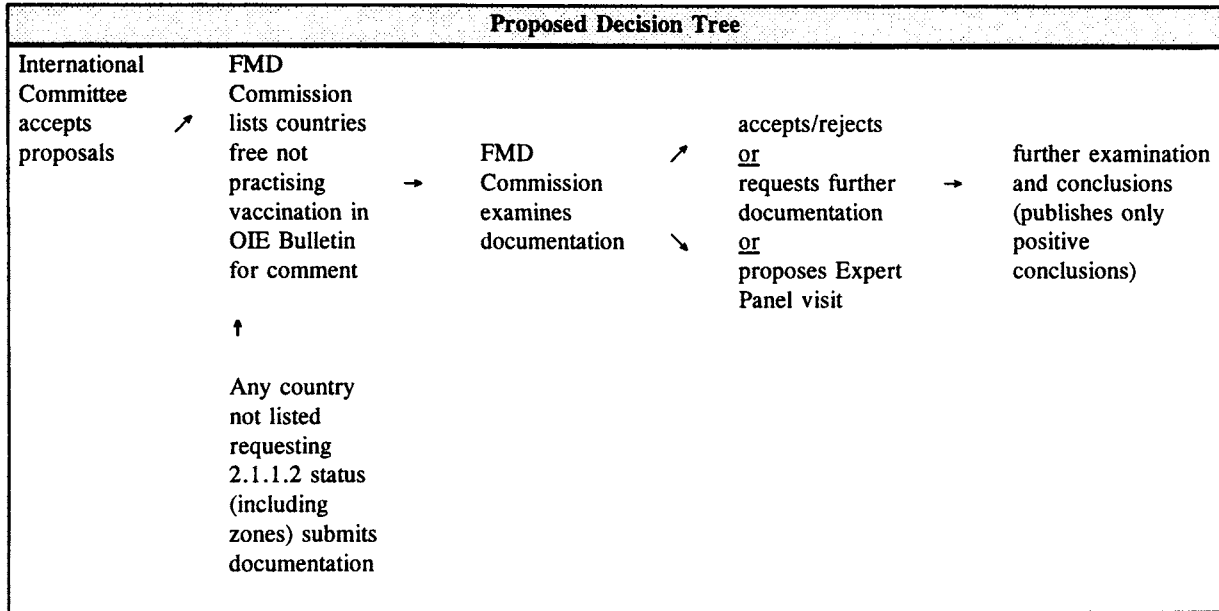
Any country not included on the baseline list may, if it wishes, request to also be listed according to one of the categories of disease freedom described in Article 2.1.1.2 of the International Animal Health Code. This could be as a result of the country believing it had a status not reflected by information previously provided to the OIE, or a change in status due to progress made in its FMD programme. A claim of an FMD free zone would require the procedure.*

This would be submitted to the Director General of the OIE and accompanied by specified documentation as per Appendix III and be referred to the FMD and Other Epizootics Commission. The Commission, with or without the assistance of an Expert Panel, as deemed appropriate, would examine the documentation and could, if convinced, provide a recommendation at this stage. Alternatively, the Commission may determine that more documentation is required or that a visit from an Expert Panel is necessary.

The cost of this visit and any other related activity by experts would be borne by the country. The administrative arrangements would be managed by the Director General. A country choosing not to incur the expense of a visit may withdraw from the process at this point. The members of the Expert Panel, normally three or four in number, would be comprised of individuals with expertise in laboratory methodology (diagnosis, vaccinology), and experience in control and eradication strategies for FMD and disease surveillance. Ideally one representative should be a member of the Commission and another an individual who is familiar with the region. The members would be nominated by the Commission in consultation with the Director General and approved by the requesting country. Soon after the visit to the country a report should be provided by the Head of the visiting group to the FMD Commission with their conclusions.

If the Commission concurs with the proposed country or zone status, with or without the assistance of the Expert Panel, and normally by correspondence, the President would request the Director General to advise Member Countries of its intention to support the country's declaration of a change in FMD status. The Member Countries would be given (60) days in which to register in writing any objection. In the case of a successful application, the Director General would advise the country and publish the information in the following issue of an OIE periodical. If there were an objection, which would have to be based on scientific or technical grounds, the country or countries making the objection would be required to submit documentation supporting their case via the Director General to the FMD and Other Epizootics Commission who would examine it, with or without the support of an Expert Panel, as deemed necessary. The Commission would decide whether to accept or reject the objection. It is recognised that countries who object and whose objection were overruled by the Commission could pursue their case at the General Session.

The maintenance of a declared status would be dependent on continued observance of OIE rules and reporting of any significant events changing that status. Failure to comply would be grounds for the OIE to revoke the given status.



* List established in accordance with Resolution No XI adopted during the 63rd General Session.

RESOLUTION No. XIII

Recommended Standards for Epidemiological Surveillance Systems for Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia

CONSIDERING THAT

1. The International Committee has designated the Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission responsibility for advising it, as and where necessary, on the nature and course, especially in terms of space and time, of the major transmissible animal diseases, and on methods for epidemiological surveillance of these diseases
2. At the 59th General Session the International Committee adopted the *Recommended Standards for Epidemiological Surveillance of Rinderpest* proposed by the Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission to provide a pathway for OIE declaration of freedom from rinderpest. This moved OIE from a normative to an operational role in assessing the disease status of Member Countries
3. Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP) causes severe economic losses, and has increased in importance both in Africa and Europe
4. The OIE continues at Member Country request to be active with the disease, notably in a 1991 OAU/IBAR/OIE strategy meeting, and in two meetings of the OIE Ad hoc Group on Surveillance and Prophylaxis of CBPP in Europe and a meeting of the OIE Ad hoc Group on CBPP Surveillance Systems in 1993
5. The latter meeting formulated *Recommended Standards for Epidemiological Surveillance Systems for Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia*. This document was revised according to suggestions by certain Delegates under the guidance of the Ad hoc Group on CBPP Surveillance Systems

THE COMMITTEE

RESOLVES

1. To adopt the *Recommended Standards for Epidemiological Surveillance Systems for Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia* appended to the report of the 16-20 January 1995 meeting of the OIE Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission.
2. To request the Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission to prepare an annex of requirements which recognise the influence of an effective surveillance system upon reducing the timeframes required before declaration of provisional freedom from disease and from infection.

(Adopted by the International Committee of the OIE on 19 May 1995)

RESOLUTION No. XIV

Establishment of a list of countries which are free of rinderpest

CONSIDERING THAT

1. The International Committee has designated the Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission responsibility for advising it, as and where necessary, on the nature and course, especially in terms of space and time, of the major transmissible animal diseases, and on methods for epidemiological surveillance of these diseases
2. At the 59th General Session the International Committee adopted the *Recommended Standards for Epidemiological Surveillance of Rinderpest* proposed by the Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission which provided a process for OIE declaration of freedom from rinderpest
3. Several Member Countries of Africa and Asia have eradicated this major epizootic disease from their countries and zones within their countries and are interested in international recognition of their rinderpest free status
4. The Regional Commission for Africa, during its 11th Conference, adopted a Recommendation that the International Committee give to the Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission a mandate to establish a list of countries (or zones within countries) which can be considered free of rinderpest
5. Information published by the OIE is derived from declarations made by the official Veterinary Services of Member Countries. The OIE is not responsible for inaccurate publication of country disease status based on curate or incomplete information or changes in epidemiological status or other significant events which were not promptly reported to the Central Bureau subsequent to the time of declaration of freedom

THE COMMITTEE

RESOLVES

1. That the OIE Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission establish a list of countries (and zones within countries) which are free of rinderpest.
2. That this list will include only those countries which officially request the OIE to consider their status according to the provisions of the *Recommended Standards for Epidemiological Surveillance of Rinderpest*.
3. That this list will be established and published by the OIE following the relevant principles described in the report of the 16-20 January 1995 meeting of the OIE Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission and Resolutions XI and XII of the 63rd General Session.

(Adopted by the International Committee of the OIE on 19 May 1995)